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CAWP Fact Sheet

Center for the American Woman and Politics
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WOMEN IN ELECTIVE OFFICE 1990

In 1990, more women are serving in Congress than ever before. Three states have women governors. The number of women in state legislatures is more than four times larger than it was twenty years ago. But women still hold only a small minority of elective offices; at no level of office do women hold more than 17.1% of the available positions.[1]

CONGRESS

In 1990, women hold **30**, or **5.6%**, of the 535 seats in the 101st U.S. Congress. **Two** women serve in the **U.S. Senate**:

Nancy Landon Kassebaum, R-KS
Barbara Mikulski, D-MD

Twenty-eight women from twenty states serve in the **U.S. House of Representatives**, including fifteen Democrats and thirteen Republicans. They are:

Helen Delich Bentley, R-MD
Lindy Boggs, D-LA
Barbara Boxer, D-CA
Beverly Byron, D-MD
Cardiss Collins, D-IL
Nancy Johnson, R-CT
Marcy Kaptur, D-OH
Barbara Kennelly, D-CT
Marilyn Lloyd, D-TN
Jill Long, D-IN
Nita Lowey, D-NY
Lynn Martin, R-IL
Jan Meyers, R-KS
Susan Molinari, R-NY
Constance Morella, R-MD
Mary Rose Oakar, D-OH
Elizabeth Patterson, D-SC
Nancy Pelosi, D-CA
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-FL
Marge Roukema, R-NJ
Patricia Saiki, R-HI
Claudine Schneider, R-RI
Patricia Schroeder, D-CO
Louise Slaughter, D-NY
Virginia Smith, R-NE
Olympia Snowe, R-ME
Jolene Unsoeld, D-WA
Barbara Vucanovich, R-NV

STATEWIDE ELECTIVE EXECUTIVE OFFICES

Women hold **46**, or **13.9%**, of the 330 statewide elective executive positions in 1990.[2]

Three women serve as **governors**: **Madeleine Kunin**, a Vermont Democrat, elected in 1984 and re-elected in 1986 and 1988; **Kay Orr**, a Nebraska Republican, who in 1986 became the first Republican woman elected governor of any state; and **Rose Mofford**, an Arizona Democrat. Mofford was re-elected secretary of state in 1986; when Governor Evan Mecham was impeached and convicted by the legislature in April 1988, Mofford became governor.

Four women serve as **lieutenant governors**: **Martha Griffiths** (D-MI), **Marlene Johnson** (DFL-MN), **Evelyn Murphy** (D-MA), and **Jo Ann Zimmerman** (D-IA). **Two** women serve in states where the **attorney general** is elected statewide: **Mary Sue Terry** (D-VA), who was elected in 1985, and **Clarine Riddle** (D-CT) who was appointed to fill a vacancy in January 1989.

Women hold statewide elective **secretary of state** positions in **eleven** states: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Wyoming. Women hold statewide elective **state treasurer** positions in **ten** states: Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

Six states — Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Missouri, Montana, and Pennsylvania — have women **state auditors**. In North Dakota the **tax commissioner** is a woman. In Arizona, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming women serve as **superintendents of public instruction**, and the **commissioner of education** in Florida is a woman. In Oregon the **commissioner of labor** is a woman, and in North Dakota the **commissioner of agriculture** is a woman. One of the **corporation commissioners** in Arizona is a woman, as is one of the **public utilities commissioners** in South Dakota.

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[1]Offices included are: U.S. Congress, statewide elective executive offices, state legislatures, county governing boards, mayoralties, and municipal and township governing boards.

[2]These numbers do not include: officials appointed to state cabinet-level positions; officials elected to executive posts by the legislature; members of the judicial branch; or elected members of university Boards of Trustees or Boards of Education.

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STATE LEGISLATURES

In 1990, **1,273**, or **17.1%**, of the 7,461 state legislators in the United States are women. Women hold 267 state senate seats and 1,006 state house seats. The number of women serving in state legislatures has more than quadrupled since 1969 when 301, or 4.0%, of all state legislators were women.

The ten states with the **highest percentages** of women state legislators are:

State	% Women	State	% Women
Vermont	33.3	Colorado	29.0
New Hampshire	32.1	Wisconsin	25.8
Maine	31.2	Kansas	25.5
Arizona	30.0	Idaho	24.6
Washington	29.3	Hawaii	23.7

COUNTY GOVERNING BOARDS

In 1988, in the 47 states which have county governing boards, women held **1,653**, or **8.9%**, of the 18,483 available seats across the country.[1] Between 1975 and 1988, the number of women serving at the county governing board level more than tripled, rising from 456 in 1975, to 1,653 in 1988.

MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS

In July 1990, among the 100 largest cities in the U.S., **16** have women mayors; 4 of these women mayors serve in cities among the 10 largest. In order of city population,[2] the mayors are: **Kathy Whitmire** (Houston, TX - 4th largest city); **Maureen O'Connor** (San Diego, CA - 7th); **Annette Strauss** (Dallas, TX - 8th); **Lila Cockrell** (San Antonio, TX - 9th); **Suzie Azar** (El Paso, TX - 24th); **Sophie Masloff** (Pittsburgh, PA - 35th); **Sue Myrick** (Charlotte, NC - 44th); **Meyera Oberndorf** (Virginia Beach, VA - 47th); **Anne Rudin** (Sacramento, CA - 49th); **Karen Humphrey** (Fresno, CA - 53rd); **Sandra Freedman** (Tampa, FL - 54th); **Betty Turner** (Corpus Christi, TX - 58th); **Peggy Rubach** (Mesa, AZ - 60th); **Terry Frizzel** (Riverside, CA - 76th); **Joan Darrah** (Stockton, CA - 84th); and **Sheri Barnard** (Spokane, WA - 95th).

In June 1990, of the 879 mayors of U.S. cities with populations over 30,000, **140**, or **15.9%**, are women.[3] Of these women mayors, 31, or 17.0%, serve in the 182 U.S. cities with populations over 100,000.

In 1985, women comprised **14.3%** of mayors and municipal council members in the states for which complete data were available. There were **14,672** women elected to these posts out of a total of 102,329 officials.[4] The percentage of women holding municipal and township offices more than tripled from 1975 to 1985, rising from 4% to 14.3%.

PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN IN ELECTIVE OFFICES

Level of Office	1975	1977	1979	1981	1983	1985	1987	1989	1990
U.S. Congress	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%
Statewide Elective[5]	10%	8%	11%	11%	13%	14%	15%	14%+	14%+
State Legislatures	8%	9%	10%	12%	13%	15%	16%	17%	17%
County Governing Boards[1]	3%	4%	5%	6%	8%	8%(1984)	9%	9%(1988)	NA
Mayors & Municipal/Township Governing Boards	4%	8%	10%	10%	NA	14%[4]	NA	NA	NA

+Although there has been an increase in the number of women serving, the percentage decrease between 1987 and 1989-90 (14.6% to 13.9%) reflects a change in the base used to calculate this percentage (from 43 out of 295 in 1987 to 46 out of 330 in 1989-90).

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[1]The three states without county governing boards are CT, RI, and VT.

[2]According to 1986 data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

[3]Adjusted United States Conference of Mayors June 1990 figures.

[4]Includes data from Washington D.C.. States for which data were incomplete and therefore not included are: IL, IN, KY, MO, PA, WI.

[5]These numbers do not include: officials appointed to state cabinet-level positions; officials elected to executive posts by the legislature; members of the judicial branch; or elected members of university Boards of Trustees or Boards of Education.

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